

Past Tense of Read: Same Spelling, New Sound

Read keeps the same spelling in the present, past and past participle. The sound changes: present read sounds like reed; past read sounds like red.

Base	read
Past	read
Past participle	read
3rd person / -ing	reads / reading

Examples

I read a book every night. — A present habit: read sounds like reed.

We read the news every morning. — Every morning marks a present habit; read rhymes with need.

She read the letter yesterday. — Yesterday tells us read is past; it sounds like red.

They read the story last week. — Last week is a finished past time.

I have read this book before. — After have, use the participle read, pronounced red.

He has read all the messages. — Has read is present perfect.

Notes

One spelling, two sounds Present read is pronounced /ri:d/ (like reed). Past and participle read are pronounced /rɛd/ (like red). Time words and helpers show which one you mean.

Read aloud Read aloud means speak written words so others can hear. In the past, it is still spelled read aloud.

Common mistakes

I red the email yesterday. → I read the email yesterday. — The past sounds like red but is always spelled read.

She has readed the book. → She has read the book. — Read is irregular. Its past participle has no -ed ending.

Exercises

Choose the correct answer

1. I ___ a story last night. (read / readed / red)
2. She has ___ your message. (red / read / readed)
3. We ___ together every weekend. (read / red / readed)
4. Which word rhymes with the past form of read? (need / red / ride)

Write the missing word

1. He ___ the sign yesterday.
2. I have ___ this poem before.
3. They ___ English books at school every week.

Correct the spelling

1. I readed the page yesterday.

Answer key

Choose the correct answer

1. read — The past is spelled read and pronounced red.
2. read — After has, use the participle read.
3. read — A present habit uses read, pronounced reed.
4. red — Past read is pronounced like red.

Write the missing word

1. read — Past read has the same spelling as present read.
2. read — The participle is read, pronounced red.
3. read — Every week marks a present habit; read is pronounced reed.

Correct the spelling

1. read — The past form is read, not readed.

<https://www.fluencyroad.com/irregular-verbs/read>